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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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COUNTRY Rumania

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Background

1. In 1946, the Rumanian Maritime Service (SMR - Serviciul Maritim Roman) was reorganized, renamed "SOVROMTRANSPORT" (SRT - Soviet-Rumanian Transport), and remained as a Rumanian State enterprise. At this time, ocean-going merchant marine shipping consisted of only two vessels over 2,000 tn. and a few small craft averaging about 500 tn. From 1946 until 1954, SOVROMTRANSPORT expanded in both personnel and shipping. [redacted] in July 1954, SOVROMTRANSPORT had 10 vessels over 2,000 tn. each and four other sea-going craft of approximately 500 tn. each. [redacted] there were about 300 personnel available to SOVROMTRANSPORT to operate the sea-going vessels. These persons, in the 35-45 year age-group, averaged six to eight years of schooling, 15 years maritime service, were all Rumanian nationals, and were predominantly Greek Orthodox; about 90 percent were married and their families resided in Constanta.
2. From 1946 until 1948, there was considerable unemployment among Rumanian merchant seamen due to the shortage of available shipping and because SOVROMTRANSPORT had only two large ocean-going vessels in operation. During the same period, all adult Rumanian personnel were required to align themselves with a political party. The Communist Party then initiated an intensive recruiting program which offered work on these two SOVROMTRANSPORT vessels to Party members of the merchant marine. Although the majority registered with the Rumanian Socialist Party in order to avoid Communist advances, approximately 20 percent of an estimated 1,000 seamen did join the Communist Party, primarily to be assured of a ship's berth. During this period, the Communist Party also inaugurated

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a job-assignment program for those persons who had been documented as authorized seamen. In order to qualify as a fully-documented seaman, a person had to belong to the Communist Party and be issued a permit to leave the country. This permit was issued only to politically-reliable individuals and allowed seamen to work on SOVROMTRANSPORT vessels visiting foreign ports. The job-assignment program consisted of dividing the fully-documented seamen into five groups and rotating the groups aboard the two vessels.

3. In 1948, when the Socialist Party merged with the Communist Party, a large surplus of available documented merchant seamen resulted, and, from 1948 until 1950, as more ships were made available to SOVROMTRANSPORT, each ship was assigned a permanent crew which was selected on the basis of political reliability. From 1950 until 1952, the issuance of permits to leave the country was extended to include individuals who, though not Party members, were mature in age, married, or had material reasons for not fleeing Rumania. This action became necessary because the Rumanian Government realized that a greater number of qualified personnel were needed to operate the SOVROMTRANSPORT vessels than could be found within the Party's ranks. In late 1952, permits to leave the country were even issued to younger unmarried merchant seamen not associated with any political party.

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Strength

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4. [redacted] aboard three SOVROMTRANSPORT vessels [redacted] each ship averaged a 48-man crew and had approximately 16 crew members, or one-third, who were Communist Party members. Three of these were convinced and active members, one of the three always included a political officer. The remainder of the crew took no part in any political activities.

[redacted] of the 300 individuals associated with SOVROMTRANSPORT, only 18 could be classified as active, convinced Communists, 75 as nominal Communist Party members, and the remaining 207 as not associated with any political party or expressing a negative attitude towards the policies of the present Rumanian regime.1

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Purges and Recruiting of New Members

5. In 1952, all members of the Communist Party in SOVROMTRANSPORT were required to report before a Party committee and, in the presence of other Party members, to state their activities since birth. [redacted] this committee was established to determine the political reliability of Party members and [redacted] approximately 20 to 30 percent of the Communist Party members in SOVROMTRANSPORT were purged at that time. The individuals included in this category did not lose their right to work with SOVROMTRANSPORT but were merely dropped from the Party rolls.

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6. In early 1954, the Communist Party again initiated a recruiting program among personnel of SOVROMTRANSPORT. [redacted]

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Privileges Granted to Party Members

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Prior to 1952, only Party members were considered for promotion because of their political reliability. After 1952, because of a change in promotion policy, experience, education, and ability were considered and promotion possibilities were equalized for all personnel. This change seemed to put Party members at a disadvantage because most promotions were given to men with the necessary occupational experience and technical abilities required for the new positions. These men were, for the most part, not Communists.

8. From 1946 until 1950, the only other known opportunity offered to Party members which was not available to non-Party members, was the chance to participate in smuggling activities as part of a ship's crew sailing in Mediterranean waters. During this period, all Communist Party members aboard SOVROMTRANSPORT vessels were allowed to bring blackmarket medicines, cigarettes, and nylon stockings into Rumania without custom control difficulties.²

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Political Education

9. Each SOVROMTRANSPORT vessel had a library. All personnel were expected to take an active interest in the library and it was a known fact that the Political Officer checked the library cards to determine the ones who did not take advantage of this "educational" opportunity. At various times, personnel were notified of selected reading requirements and were required to attend discussion periods of this selected reading. In this regard, the usual procedure taken by crew members was to take out one book on each voyage, keep the book throughout the trip, dog-ear the pages of the book without reading the contents, and then go to sleep during the discussion periods or swing the conversation to other subjects.
10. Every day aboard ship, both in and out of the home port, there was a scheduled meeting for all personnel during which the Political Officer talked about the benefits of Communism, Soviet-Rumanian relationships, freedom of the peoples, etc. These lectures usually lasted one hour. The audience was not very attentive. The only members of the crew who seemed to be impressed were the newly-assigned young boys. [redacted] it was amusing to watch the change in attitude of the youths after they had made a few trips to Western countries. This educational program had no effect upon the older seamen for they had "seen the world" and knew what it was really like outside the Soviet sphere of influence. When the ships were in Constanta, the usual subject of these meetings concerned improving work to improve the country.

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Communist Organizations

11. Each SOVROMTRANSPORT vessel had a Union of Working Youth (UTM - Uniunea Tineretului Muncitoresc) group, composed of individuals from 16 to 24 years of age. Only those individuals who had belonged to this nation-wide youth organization for a period of time took an active interest in its program, and possibly only two or three members were really interested.

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12. Every adult employee of SOVROMTRANSPORT was required to join the Rumanian Association to Strengthen Friendship with the Soviet Union (ARLUS - Asociatia Romana pentru Strangerea Legaturilor cu Uniunea Sovietica). Approximately 75% of the personnel of SOVROMTRANSPORT were members.

The activities of this association consisted of a lecture program aboard SOVROMTRANSPORT ships once each month at 1300 hours. Each lecture lasted for about one-half hour and dealt with news from the USSR, building progress, factories and their accomplishments, etc. All material for these lectures was kept by the Political Officer on the ship. [] there was very little interest in the program.

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Nature of Attitude Towards Communism of Employees

13. [] the attitudes of the 300 persons employed by SOVROMTRANSPORT could be classified as follows: 1 25X1

<u>Attitude</u>	<u>Individuals</u>
Intense dissatisfaction	100
Strong dislike	150
Resigned dislike or distaste	25
Voiced approval	20
No voiced sentiment	5

Changes in Attitude Towards Communism of Employees

14. The typical change in attitude, from voiced approval to strong dislike, took place even among SOVROMTRANSPORT employees who were Communist Party members. Most of the individuals joined the Communist Party in order to obtain special benefits. SOVROMTRANSPORT Communist Party members who failed to receive a promotion, special medical or educational benefits became disillusioned and disappointed. Although they remained card holders, they refrained from taking any active part in the Communist Party program.
15. Another change in attitude from no voiced sentiment to a strong dislike was noticeable among those individuals who had their first opportunity to travel outside of Rumania and the Soviet sphere of influence. This attitude change usually took place after several voyages.

1. [] Comment: The figures given in paragraphs 4 and 13 are general estimates

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2. [] 25X1

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